

## CLAIMS

Therefore, having thus described the invention, at least the following is claimed:

1 1. A system for providing access to a plurality of data media and adapted for use  
2 with a data storage system, the data storage system comprising a plurality of media  
3 storage devices for storing the plurality of data media, a data exchange device for  
4 exchanging data stored on the plurality of data media, and a media handling system for  
5 transferring the plurality of data media between the plurality of media storage devices and  
6 the data exchange device, the system for providing access comprising:

7 a bulk access apparatus configured to cover a plurality of openings in the data  
8 storage system, each of the openings providing access to one of the media storage  
9 devices; and

10 a locking mechanism configured to provide a first state in which the bulk access  
11 apparatus is securely attached to the data storage system and in which access to the  
12 plurality of openings is restricted, and a second state in which the bulk access apparatus is  
13 not locked to the data storage system and access to the plurality of openings is provided.

1 2. The system of claim 1, wherein the bulk access apparatus comprises a hinged door  
2 that is attached to the data storage system.

1 3. The system of claim 1, wherein the bulk access apparatus comprises a removable  
2 panel.

1 4. The system of claim 1, wherein the locking mechanism comprises a key lock.

1 5. The system of claim 4, wherein the key lock is attached to the bulk access  
2 apparatus and a key latch is attached to the data storage system.

1 6. The system of claim 1, wherein the locking mechanism further comprises a  
2 solenoid lock.

1 7. The system of claim 6, wherein the locking mechanism is attached to the data  
2 storage system and a solenoid latch is attached to the bulk access apparatus.

- 1 8. A data storage system for handling and storing a plurality of data media, the data  
2 storage system comprising:
- 3 a housing having a plurality of openings, each of the openings providing access to  
4 one of a plurality of media storage devices, each media storage device operable to receive  
5 a plurality of data media;
- 6 a media handling system configured to transferring the plurality of data media  
7 between the plurality of media storage devices and a data exchange device;
- 8 a bulk access apparatus configured to cover a plurality of openings in the data  
9 storage system, each of the openings providing access to one of the media storage  
10 devices; and
- 11 a locking mechanism configured to provide a first state in which the bulk access  
12 apparatus is securely attached to the data storage system and in which access to the  
13 plurality of openings is restricted and a second state in which the bulk access apparatus is  
14 not securedly attached to the data storage system and access to the plurality of openings is  
15 provided.

- 1 9. The data storage system of claim 8, wherein the bulk access apparatus comprises a  
2 hinged door that is attached to the housing.

- 1 10. The data storage system of claim 8, wherein the bulk access apparatus comprises a  
2 removable panel.

1 11. The data storage system of claim 8, wherein the locking mechanism comprises a  
2 key lock.

1 12. The data storage system of claim 11, wherein the locking mechanism is attached  
2 to the bulk access apparatus and a key latch is attached to the housing.

1 13. The data storage system of claim 8, wherein the locking mechanism further  
2 comprises a solenoid lock.

1 14. The data storage system of claim 13, wherein the locking mechanism is attached  
2 to the housing and a solenoid latch attached to the bulk access apparatus.

1 15. A method for accessing a plurality of data media in a data storage system, the data  
2 storage system comprising a plurality of media storage devices for storing the plurality of  
3 data media, a data exchange device for exchanging data stored on the plurality of data  
4 media, and a media handling system for transferring the plurality of data media between  
5 the plurality of media storage devices and the data exchange device, the method  
6 comprising the steps of:  
7 unlocking a means for covering a plurality of openings in the data storage system,  
8 each of the openings providing access to one of the media storage devices; and  
9 providing access to the plurality of openings in the data storage system.